On Music

A Compilation of Excerpts on Listening to Music

and

The Paul Herzen Story

by
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M708

What I want to say is a very important thing.

It has to do primarily with music than only that I want to tell you that music you must never confuse. You must never give it a certain name. You must never try to say, “Oh, it is like this or like something else.” Music stands by itself and that not even to this extent that you must say, like sometimes some people have said, “It is music inspired by Gurdjieff”. It is absolutely not true. There is no connection whatsoever. It just happens to be music which I like, or to some extent, which I want to play and to some extent then it is something that happens perhaps to be tinted by whatever my experience may have been and that it flows through a certain channel that I happen to call myself. It has nothing to do with Gurdjieff than only to the extent that of course I have been influenced by Gurdjieff and that the totality of my psychological makeup is, you might say, mixed with many things from early life together with a certain amount of work and trying to see what are the values of life and that that, in a totality, has made a certain conviction within me, so that I believe that if I would be able to put everything in words that I think about every once in a while, I have a strange kind of a notion that it might be useful in the future.

M718

I would like to say something regarding this question of music; what it really could mean. Because music is a language. It is, of course, the kind of language that is not expressed in words, It's only sounds. No particular formulation, and for that reason probably not easily understood, because different sounds will appear different to different people. Very much the same, however, as the different words will appear differently to different people depending on their connection, their connotations, and their conditioning.

In sounds it is very much that same way, although it is a little bit further removed. And it comes a little closer to the possibility of expressing something that cannot be expressed in words.

It is a form of communication. And it is a question where does it come from? Though it many times comes from one' consciousness. And then when we try talk at meetings it is really to feed consciousness, that is to try to understand what is needed for life from the standpoint of consciousness, how to try to reach to become more conscious, and how to talk about the ways how it can be reached, what kind of method is available, and what do we do with it?

With music it is on the basis of one's feeling, If it is rightly understood it could become an emotion. And the central point for that is one's conscience. That if, conscience will function exactly the same way as consciousness would function in the mind.

How to develop it. By an openness, a relaxation, and quite definitely a freedom from the ordinary kind of formulation. That is, it is not like words. The sounds have to be understood for whatever they are worth. And the realm that they belong to is exactly that it is impossible to put them in words, or even to formulate or to hint at them.

How can a conscience listen? It is really quite important to see what one has to do.

It belongs to an emotional sphere. And since emotions are tied up with the condition of the body, as you know, the first requirement is that the body is absolutely relaxed. If it isn't that, it will affect any kind of an effect on the feeling center and the translation of that kind of a feeling will immediately go

into a certain state of the body. The more relaxed you can be, the more you out, as it were, the connection between your body and your feeling center, And the more possibility there is for the feeling center to function on its own.

This is a very long process. But the process of listening to one's conscience is also a long one, because conscience is not developed. And it cannot develop in the atmosphere in which usually we live. So that even if there is a little inkling of something that perhaps could start to talk, it is drowned out immediately with our ordinary life.

So again, if one wants relaxation for the body, one has to have relaxation for the mind also. And you have to try to exclude from yourself, while you listen, the different kinds of thoughts of worry perhaps, and whatever may have been happening before. Do not try to think. Try to eliminate it as much as you can. You will not be able to eliminate it entirely, and it is necessary that the mind continues to function in a very simple way. But do not give attention to the thoughts. Sometimes you say I can have this operate better if you close your eyes. Maybe you can. Maybe you can also have a certain staring with your eyes so that there is no reception in your mind. And that the thoughts that are there also will take their place because they are not called upon. That is, they can be left alone, because associations don't call then. And you do not feed, if you possibly can, the association.

So that is a second requirement. You can call it quietness of your mind. Of course it has to do also with not classifying, not determining, not recognizing, not saying it is this and that or sounds line this or that — freedom to receive. And it is in the sound itself. A combination of sounds. What is expressed in it? Not the harmony. And not even a melody. But what is it? Vibration rates by means of touch. Sometimes vibration rates by means of a rhythm. Sometimes by means of the use of a pedal.

These are the three fundamental things regarding listening to sounds which can produce in you a reverberation in your emotional center. If you digest it, that is, if it penetrates, if it really starts to function, it will feed your conscience. And sometimes your conscience will become quite verbal. Not in words. But give you at certain times definitely a realization of a level in which you could live. Or it even might create in you the possibility of wishing for something that you don't have.

These are requirements regarding listening to music if one wants to listen to it as a form of communication. Relaxation; emptying of your mind, just listening to the vibration rates which might touch you. Three things. It is not easy, because they have to be done simultaneously. If it is only one, the other two will create difficulties and obstacles. All three together can produce a very definite result.

One has to learn that. It is not so easily acquired. It is worthwhile to learn it, at least to make the attempt.

Try your best.

M735

Now again, if you listen to music, how imperative it is that you free yourself from all kind of notions, and that there is the possibility of notes and sounds penetrating in you, that you let them penetrate and that you don't oppose it. But for that, of course, the more relaxed you are, the better it will be. But don't have any preconceived notions within and don't try, I've said it many times, to classify, because it won't do you any good. Not that it is necessary to have enjoyment out of music. It's necessary to be wakened up. It is necessary to be affected. It's necessary to have something come in that starts life going in you. And to the extent that that life becomes noticeable for yourself be very happy that it does happen because such events for oneself usually don't occur because we're much too much closed up and we have too many shields that are very seldom penetrated.

Try to listen that way. In that sense you come to yourself. In that sense also that self could become hypnotized. But this time, you allow it because there's something else that will grow at the same time.

M 825

When music strikes one as a sound, dependent entirely on the condition in which the body is, and of course also the way the feeling center and the mental functions are, the more relaxed they are, the more there is a possibility of receiving any kind of an impression. And when it is sound, the reception of that in the first place is through one's ears; and if one is physically as well as feelingly; I don't want to call it emotion; feelingly, sufficiently relaxed, then the sound does not always have to go to the head, where it always usually goes as recording of anything that comes in through the ears and then one hears it. There is a possibility then that when the sound hits the ear and the eardrum, that part of it goes to the brain, and part goes to a certain section of the brain which is connected with feeling center, that is the -- the hypothalamus and the thalamus. It is not very clear, and it is not as yet sufficiently connected. That is why I said in the beginning that if one is Awake it is the best way by which one can hear, because in a state of Awakeness there is a connection between the brain and the heart, not solar plexus; and for that reason that whenever then sounds enter into the head of someone, the possibility is that the heart can be affected by the energy as received -- by the energy as received through the ear.

So there are two possibilities of that kind of a reception. The reception itself, that is the recording in the brain as sound and the recording in one's heart as a vibration rate need not have the same kind of a result; that is they are not identical. Sometimes they are quite different even, and what one hears with the brain and what one hears in that sense, listen or feels or is -- is affected by one's heart, can have a different connotation, mainly because the associations of the heart are quite different from the associations of the mind. What one tries to do, in a state of being relaxed, is to bring the particular functions of the brain and the heart; I say heart when one is Awake; I say solar plexus when one is not Awake; so assuming that one is Awake, the problem is then to be in either the brain or in the heart, in such a way that the sound can be received in two ways.

The third possibility is that actually the body starts to receive sounds, that is this way: if you have a tuning fork which is vibrating at a certain rate, and you put next to it another tuning fork, without striking it; that is if you stop the first tuning fork, having been struck first, the second tuning fork starts to vibrate in the same tone. They have to be adjusted to each other. If it's an A, the other has to be an A, but then that starts without being struck,

because the first one had been struck and has sent out vibrations. The body can function as a second tuning fork whenever there are sounds outside which can affect the body as it is, only when the body is in an extremely relaxed state. That is, the sounds can sometimes be very loud and also suggestive, if you want to use that word, that is it can appeal to one, but then very often like a march, or music of a certain rhythm, or dance music can affect the body in such a way that it starts to act with it in a certain form of movement. It's a similar kind of principle, but what I mean this time is that the body actually vibrates In the same tonality as the music which is outside.

So in that way there are three ways of receiving music, and it depends then on how strong one, or the other, or the third is, if out of the totality of the three something can be combined as a form of fusion, which then produces a state in oneself of a result of the three different kind of centers being affected in a certain way. That particular state is a level of one's being, where one is at that time as experiencing music, whatever it may be, whatever the sounds may be. And that will then determine, because of this state of being a pleasurable or an unpleasurable one. It's not at all pleasurable. Harmony need not be pleasurable, because harmony gives a balance; that is one can, in regard to that what is outside music, musical form, be at ease with it; it does not leave one shocked. This is a recognition of the form of harmony that I'm talking about.

So whatever the condition may be that the body receives during such a time, the more relaxed it is, the more there is that possibility of using it, together with the affects on the other two centers, for something very definite. And sometimes in that kind of a state of -- of being, it is an elevation of being, since the fusion takes place not in an ordinary sense. The requirement is that one is Awake. How long one can remain Awake, how long that can be extended, how often one can be Awake at times, it depends of course entirely on the ability of a person. But I'm talking only about that what might happen. If anything happened of a similar kind, simply accept it.

You see, in order to make the mind function in this sense, and -- and the feeling center function in this sense, one has to be free entirely from associations. Any kind or any form of recognition that it sounds like a -- a little Mozart, or a "Little Waterfall", you know, or something that is like Bach as a fugue, or like Liszt, all that it should be eliminated.

One listens to music like you listen to a bird singing. You're not classifying it. You don't even put it in notes. You don't hear it even as a scale. You just hear it. You recognize it sometimes, and particularly if you play yourself, recognizing certain chords. You also might even visualize the way the chord is made. You might hear the vibration rates. You might, if you have a good ear for instance, an absolute ear, you might distinguish between different tonalities. The touch you can also be very sensitive to it. The touch is a question of one's feeling. The question of rhythm, it's partly feeling and partly mind. The question of combination of sounds in overtones, it is partly again a recognition in the mind and a recognition with one's feeling. The question of the use of the pedal, particularly when the pedal is used to strengthen the overtones, that can give a rate of vibration for one's feeling center or even for one's heart, which is extremely useful.

But you see, I'm now analyzing what actually could take place, and the analysis is when it has taken place. When it does take place one does not analyze. One simply takes it. And as it goes along, as I said before I started to play, the expectancy of a certain melody can sometimes spoil it. And the reason why sometimes the melody is not at all what might be expected, is really to draw attention that there is something different. And I do this many times, because I don't want to have the stereotyped form that one has to have it in accordance with the, you know, as certain tonalities according to certain scales in C in F, or in C in G, or a quint, or a relationship of the three, and so forth. I want to eliminate that. Also rhythm sometimes has to be eliminated. Sometimes it has to be syncopated in a certain way, bordering you might say sometimes on jazz; all of it in order to draw attention to the fact that things do not always have to go in the way one thinks they ought to go as they always have been. It should be different.

It does not mean that one wants to use this difference in order to bring about a definite effect. That is not the reason. For instance, you could bring about an effect in music by tuning your piano just a little bit off, and sometimes people do that. Let's say a higher C is just a couple of degrees off in vibration rate, and therefore it is not harmonious, but it draws attention. But that of course is a little trick. It's the same thing as an orator telling a story at the proper time, or also knowing that he has to change his voice at a certain time. You know? I say they are tricks. They are tricks when they are not Consciously done, because it is according to a certain cliche. When it is done Consciously it's quite a different thing, because one has in mind then a definite aim that ought to be reached. When that is reached, it is right from a

Conscious standpoint. How you digest for yourself whatever was the effect on you, you don't have to talk about that.

M996

Now, music and movements and intellectual pursuits like meetings are three different ways to teach us. To teach man, mankind, human beings in the way they are, which of course is for each human being his body, and feeling center up to the point where it is sufficiently developed and mentally. Of course these three, let's call them bodies and half bodies or beginnings of bodies or perhaps even centers which are potential of course are not all equal. They are not equal in growth, that is, one has been more developed than the others, the physical body mostly developed, the whole octave of the physical body. But they are not equal in value either, so it is not quantity, but in value.

Now this depends on the kind of a person and sometimes the values have to be shared between the feeling and between the intellect. There are very few values that really belong to the body itself and the body becomes an instrument, that is the body is the only means by which feelings and intellectual pursuits or mental processes can be manifested. Without the body we couldn't really do anything. So when one says, what is the important part, the body becomes then quite secondary and then there is a tossup between that which is feeling and what is the intellect and it depends on one's type which predominates and sometimes it is balanced, sometimes it is overbalanced, that is overemphasized in one direction or another, too much intellectualism, too much emotionalism. The golden mean, you might say, is between the two, but again, they are not equal.

The emotional or the beginning of the emotional is only Do-Re-Mi, intellectual is only Do, according to our scale. Is Do worth more than Do-Re-Mi? It's a very interesting question because Do-Re-Mi belongs together. Automatically, Do will be followed by Re and by Mi when the circumstances are correct. If this Do-Re-Mi of the emotional body is in the unconscious state, it will develop. Whenever the Do is struck, the Re and the Mi will follow, I say, it's logical. As far as the Do of intellect is concerned, the situation is quite different. Do of intellect remains still in an unconscious state and although it has the possibility of seeing what might take place, it remains only a hope. And only when the conditions are such that actually work is done, can it go on in the Do-Re-Mi which belongs for intellect in the conscious state. So you see, there are limitations to any one of the three. The body is dependent on the other two, the feeling center is half developed in a natural so called unconscious way and the Do of intellect on which we could place our hopes, is impossible to develop unless something is done to it.

Now what takes place with movements or with music, that then ultimately could affect the intellect. This becomes a very important question because with the intellect one reaches after a little while a certain impasse. Not much more can be contained in the skull, even if it is material that has to do with Objectivity and even if it is clear and logically built up, unless something is happening to that quantity of material of an intellectual kind, it will never give enough of a balance for the rest of the body and for that reason it has to be put to practice, we call it, by using it in manifestations of the physical body, which of course, is quite correct to bring about a certain balance and you might say to empty the intellect so that more material of an objective kind can be put into it or rather that 'I', being intellectual in character in the beginning, has more chance of developing.

Now, what do we do with meetings? In the first place, we gather material in order to clarify one's mind and also some of the material is meant quite definitely to be used in an emotional sense and many times I've said it is not necessary to recall everything that's been said in an evening, but that one can go home with a feeling of wanting to do something with whatever one has and when that stimulus has been made, and when that has been you might call it successful, then the reason for coming to the meeting is already justified.

Music is an entirely different kind of approach. It requires on your part, a certain amount of work which is not necessary for meetings when you listen intellectually. The amount of work that is needed for that particular growth is afterwards put to practice. With music, it has to be put to practice at the moment and this is the fundamental difference between how a person can be affected with music because for that he has to be in the first place quite relaxed, which is already an activity on his own part, that is, something has to be done, he has to be open, porous in his body as well as in his feeling center or his mind, he has to be free from all kinds of connotations or associations, all kind of relating whatever one hears with something one already has heard before or known before, no classification, no recognition; no recall in memory of something that looks like this and that. All of that is work and it has to be done at the moment music is being played.

It does not mean that the music has to be so-called objective. Don't make a mistake about that. If it is music that is new for you, that you have not had a chance as yet to classify, it can have already because of it's newness,

that kind of an effect. And it depends then entirely on the way you are then preparing for listening to it and again if you try to listen without prejudice, you will probably be able to derive a certain emotional effect and an intellectual one to the extent that it strikes certain logical notes, logical combinations of notes with which you are familiar. If you're not familiar with that kind of a realm, that kind of a world, it has nothing to say, it doesn't talk to you, but without any question, with relaxation, the body can receive any music, unconscious or conscious.

If it is conscious, that is, if it is produced, you might say in a conscious way by combination of certain notes that strike one in a different sense, not as a logically built up chord, but as a combination of certain tones which do not necessarily belong together but which follow a certain harmony of their own and that, because of that kind of play with notes and overtones and the different kind of rhythms and the climaxes and the different way of how a pedal is being used and how it sings through or not and how sometimes it is not correct, not correctly harmonious, but exactly because of that produces a certain effect of its unusualness, it stirs one up. And in that sense when one works that way, that is, when one is open to it, then one can derive from it a certain I call it, a disturbance.

As long as it is a liking or so, it is not much good. It should not be liked, it should be taken in, it should be digested, it should give you food, it should be placed somewhere where you don't really know what to do with it, nevertheless you know it's there and it starts a certain possibility of a movement of a kind in one's heart. Sometimes it is only in your solar plexus and sometimes it is in the totality of the body when the body is affected.

I've explained that before, that whenever there is music, that vibration rates can start the body also to vibrate in a certain rate or a certain ratio corresponding to that rate of vibration. So whenever that is done, it is helpful for the feeling center, because the feeling center is still distributed over the totality of the body in the form of nerve nodes that really belong and are functioning in a feeling sense and are not as yet sufficiently connected to make a center.

So when those three requirements, intellectual, not wanting to classify, the emotional one of opening the range of the emotion in the form of a dynamic vibration and a dynamic flow or a dynamic condition of movement, and the openness of the body by means of this relaxation process, that then

that what is music for one, can become food for one when it is heard, taken in, digested that way, it can become food.

Now, with movements as contrasted to a meeting, as contrasted to a feeling, to music, to a feeling center. Movements are correct when one anticipates them. I've said this many times. It is that one already visualizes the body in a position which it is going to take. It is an attempt of a very special kind for the mind, but it is also that the body has to know it for itself, dependent many times on the music that is being played, but the body then is willing to put itself in that kind of a state, in that kind of a posture as required by the movements, which the mind supplies as a possibility of vision, the realization of that visual possibility is an affair for the body itself.

Now you see, here you have the three different kind of approaches to man. The intellect has to do with the past, the emotion has to do with the present and movements as exercises have to do with the future. All three together can make man complete because he is a man of the past, the future and he wishes to remain in the present. Both meetings, intellectual pursuits and movements can be very helpful to augment the final result in an emotional sense and when that is already touched by means of whatever is there intellectually that one can be touched by emotionally and whatever there is in the music accompanying the movements, the emotions are being prepared so that then the real fundamental way of being affected and which does not require that one is passive, if one remains active, is really with music.

That is why I place that kind of a value on it. I place it much and much higher than intellect. It is of course true that many things can be said by means of a tone combination which cannot be said in the form of words at all. And that particular framework, although it may be limited when one has an instrument to play, but still it is possible to make connections or combinations or certain, I always love the word configurations, a certain way of arrangement which then can affect one. And then of course music par excellence, is when it is sung, an instrument is that close to one like a vocal chord, and that in the singing then; that what is life of man can immediately be expressed without having to go through an instrument to produce sounds.

Now you can say that we very seldom sing. That's not true. There's a tremendous amount in one that could come out as a song, a song in the first place with the variety of how one speaks. There has to be much more of a

range of possibility of different kinds of sounds in one's speech, much more than we usually have and it has to be practiced. In the second place, one has to express one's feeling by means of a state of joy when one is alone; one has to sing, one has to hum. One has to use one's voice for the possibility of an expression of some kind of course, it remains emotionally tinted and which sometimes is very far from what one feels or even what one imagines to be.

At the same time it's useful for the training of oneself. And, of course, in the third place, if it can be used as a voice which has been trained, then it must be used for the expression of love of God. In that sense, religious singing, songs that are being sung "a cappella", if you know what I mean by that, without accompaniment, only voices, choirs, young or old voices, the four different possibilities of range of voice, bass and soprano and whatever it may be in certain forms of harmony sung for the love of God, that is for the love of oneself becoming God, for the love of oneself as God meant it to be, for the love of God as he exists for man, for the love of man to exist as the love of God wishes him to be.

This can be a song. If it is totally, that is, if it is not per day, if it is not every ten minutes or an hour or whenever, but if it is totally, that is, if it is a combination of all such days in one's life, it becomes the song of one's life. That what a life should be, should be one song, a song of living, a song of enjoyment of being alive, of recognizing that there is something in one that wishes to continue to live and that then something in one, tries to take or to put into a certain form, that what is life in the manifestation of man and that creation is like a song, a song in eternity, in the (- - -), a song in the sphere, a song which vibrates on Earth but mostly a song which reaches, again from the standpoint of earth, to the heavens, for one's own existence and by means of which, one then climbs up the ladder of music.

Again it is an octave, but now an octave of a very special kind because each Do and Re and Mi and Fa has a meaning as expressed in the song of one's life and it is this building of that what is one's own harmony, that ultimately makes Gurdjieff call man harmonious because it is music to meet such a person because in that sense, he becomes remarkable. So, what you can make out of your life, can be made into a combination of an orchestra as a group and it's really that kind of music that ultimately will pave the way to become free.

To freedom.

We do a little bit like in New York. In New York On Friday evening is what we call Group IV. It's a little different from the other groups. Because as you know we have three others and the first one is for the, to use Gurdjieff's terminology esoteric; the second group is mesoteric; and the third group is exoteric. I don't have a name for the fourth group, but the characteristic is that I don't have to answer any questions. And that I can select any kind of a subject that I want to talk about and usually you might say dictated by listening to some tapes or maybe a subject that we have discussed at any one of the meetings which I think needs a little more elucidation. So I have freedom on an evening like that to, to talk, and not too long and usually it ends up with drinking to the health of somebody or something. Well, that we cannot do because we have no Armagnac and we have to dispense with it. So we won't have the necessity even of ending it that way.

But I want to say just a few words about music because it's appropriate. It belongs to art, of course, and we talked about that yesterday. Music, of course, is a means of communicating. It is a language of a certain kind. Surely it is not words. Sounds perhaps. It is more than sounds because it is not only a combination of several and a certain form of harmony or maybe cacophonically arranged, but also it has in it many other qualities of depth, a certain volume, what we call touch, what we call singing through by means of the pedal, aside from melodies or special combinations of sounds in certain forms of harmony which because of its resolution and linking it up together can form then, you might say, a sentence or what sometimes we call phrasing. A certain rhythm, a cadence, a certain way of up and down indicating that there is emphasis on one thing or less on another.

But you see the question is now, if that is a language, how do we listen to it and how can you take it in such a way that you can understand it. Because plainly it is not just hearing. If you do hear it, very often with your ears, you will hear differently but mostly we use the ears in order to register the sound in your mind and then get into your mind in some way. And immediately in your ordinary mind you start to associate with that what you have heard already before. You start to recognize it, you compare it, it is something like this, something like something else that you do remember. It produces sometimes because of a melody a certain other kind of a memory with which that melody is associated, or a similar kind of music that reminds you of something that Mozart or Bach or whoever has written before. And

then it is produced in you in a certain state in which you then by the association start to give it a name and the memory then recalls certain events of yourself in which you, of course, were sometimes emotionally involved or in any event that you remember.

I think music should never be taken that way. It is always taken that way really, and the difficulty I think is because of the kind of music you hear. It is very often an interpretation of someone else who has written it. It's quite interesting to see that music as far as art is concerned is quite fundamentally different compared to what we call art when we discuss painting. In music it is allowed that you play what someone else has written for you. And, of course, I leave alone now that what is done by the composer when he plays his own music. That is a different thing. But that happens very seldom, as most of our concerts are based on performing artists who play then in a certain way, Chopin or whoever, the way they understand it or interpret it. And for the composer he tries to indicate how it ought to be played by making little signs and ritardando and this has to be in accordance with a certain cadence or a certain tremolo, emphasis, fortissimo and so forth. He tries to guide it because he has a perfect right to try to tell you how to play it because he wrote it.

Now I think much of this came when there were several pieces of orchestra together for which then a certain organization was necessary in order for each different person to play it in harmony with the others. And with that I think it became a performance, because a composer could never play whatever he starts to write for different instruments together. And maybe that has gone over into piano or violin music or when you have single instruments. And it may also be the poverty on the part of ourselves that we feel a little bit more at home in something that has already been played and was liked and that we attach, kind of, our name to what someone else already has done.

In painting it is just the other way. Paintings always have to be original and very seldom that you will want a copy of the Rembrandt's Nightwatch or whatever to be shown as your own; it goes as a copy and it is a considered a study. So why this really is, in music as we now perform it, I don't know, but in doing it I think we miss really the opportunity of how music should be. Music should come from a person as he is in a certain state, playing or whatever he does in the music, even singing; that he gives, at such a time, that what is alive in him and it should be a direct route to a person who

listens to it and not via another person who reinterprets, even if he does it with the best of his knowledge and the best of his intention. And you might say that in an extreme case that the person who becomes a performer and plays let's say Beethoven all the time, starts to look like Beethoven in the end. And of course there are examples of that. Frederick (- - -) for instance in Europe who played Beethoven and nothing else but Beethoven and concentrated on that, started to look like him. I don't know if he got deaf but in any event he looked like Beethoven sitting on the piano, at the piano.

But these cases are very seldom because most of the composers are supposed to play almost anything under the sun. A little bit of classical, a little bit of modern, a little bit of unknown somebody, and in general they have to be experts and they have to play Mozart as well as Chopin as well as Debussy as well as Scriabin as well as someone else and particularly the modern music which of course many of them don't understand at all. And, the result is very often that they cannot really do justice to whatever they are playing and moreover they have a great difficulty in emphasizing the brilliancy of playing as explained by that technique, and in that way, they miss the opportunity of expressing emotions because they cannot feel and re-feel, as it were, what someone else has felt for them before. And it always will remain a second-hand kind of a performance.

The reason I say this is that I think music as we know it is really not put in the right place. And that is why I don't want to play anything that belongs to someone else. I would like to play something that is, poor as it is, still my own because it has to be the representation of something that is alive in me. Now what is alive and how can one communicate it? In the first place when it is original you will not be able so easily to put a tag on it. And you would have to avoid, even, in your own mind to try to analyze it in that way, and to start comparing it. In other words that what you hear with your brain, the registration in your brain of that what are sounds, you should try to register these simply as sounds only. In that way quite pure, and to some extent even objectively without any like or dislike with it, without any name, without classification, without trying to remember or comparing it with something you have heard before, even if it is a melody that you remember from your childhood, and which you would like to compare with a little title of, let's say, "Die Schone Mullerin" or "On the tooth of my youngest child" and things of that kind.

Naturally, it's all utter nonsense. Music is not to be interpreted that way. This is not the way we listen to a bird. When the bird sings we have absolutely nothing to go by, and even if you would like to bring a note or put a note, "the sounds of a bird" it's really utterly impossible. At most, what you can write up are the vibration rates, but that in itself is not music. Music is composed of course of many, many different things, and the notes are only a very small part. It is the way how a note is produced. There are limitations in an instrument, of course in a piano, maybe less in the violin or in the cello, maybe a little bit more than the flute or a piccolo or oboe or even recorder, because you are limited to that what is being used for the formation of tones.

And perhaps the best instrument is your vocal chord if that is well enough developed. And that singing by a man or singing as a choir still has to rank highest as far as the expression of music or sound is concerned when it has to do with something that, is alive in one. For that you have to have something if you want to receive it. And what has to be played also is something that is of a different kind in your intellect and, of course, it is an emotional quality. The emotional quality in music is maybe the way it is atoned, that is, the touch, and it is also the way certain combination of notes can sing together. It is sometimes the emphasis of overtones, sometimes the extension of tones as far as the piano is allowed to do it.

And if you compare, for instance, an organ with piano, you have exactly that particular kind of a problem of an organ being able to sustain a note which you cannot sustain that easily in the piano. At the same time you don't want a note that constantly goes through the whole music, unless that note is fundamental. The only instrument that can do that is the bagpipe. I don't know if you are familiar with it. That has a sustaining note as something that is like a basis, a basis against which the different notes and melodies are projected, and it forms then in the performance and in the performer something quite fundamental which for him becomes, if he does it right, an absoluteness which otherwise cannot be reached.

If you are dependent on a piano, and you have rhythm, you have a certain melody, you try not to recognize or give it a name, you try to hear it as sound entering into you. Of course it will go through your ear. At your ear there is a chance of dividing, and that what is of an emotional quality can go to your heart direct without having to go through your mind. It's a special way of hearing, but it is quite possible to receive it that way. It is a way of receiving it through your ear. It also can be received through the body itself.

And sometimes when the body is open to that, it can reach your heart; and when the body is actually in the state of great relaxation, the body itself can take it as such and start to vibrate in accordance with rates of vibration to the music.

This becomes extremely interesting because it is the third way by which music can be taken in. And then the body starts to function; and particularly it is true when there are rhythms, and very notable rhythms, which affect you so that the body vibrates like a tuning fork, starts to vibrate when another one of the same rate of vibration is struck. You know, you have two tuning forks, you strike one, you put them down and there is another one in the neighborhood, you put them on the same plane, on the same table, and you stop the first one, the other will continue the note. You know that is physics as an experiment. It's exactly like that when one can listen to music in that relaxed state. One has to be very relaxed because otherwise there are too many tensions in the body that would prevent it.

The three different ways by which now music of this kind can be received are all simultaneously available in the personality of a person. The more objective one can be, the better it will be in your mind; the more you can be relaxed the better it will be as an emotional quality and the possibility of reaching your heart, and the more relaxed again you are, the more chance there is that actually your body itself starts to take part in it, and becomes, you might say, part of the music because it starts to vibrate on its own. This is true of receiving it.

When one listens in that way, the three effects on one can be combined. They are not combined in any particular way of harmony as we know it and there is no prescription because it depends on how a person is. Each person is different. Don't make a mistake about that. And for that reason there is no way to compare it. You know for yourself what it is, sometimes you cannot put it in words even, but there is a possibility of being affected. And that being affected does not mean you have to like it. It means that you have to receive a certain form, I call it simply, life, which at first is divided into three parts and is then connected and combined again in me, in order to produce a certain force within you, which perhaps can make you do things or can give you thoughts or, without any question, can give you definite feelings regarding sometimes the rest of mankind, sometimes regarding that which you are supposed to do, sometimes regarding a possible understanding of what is really necessary for the continuation of conditions

as they are, or sometimes the way they ought to be changed. In general, it is a way of feeling love in the real sense, as a love for one's fellow man. In that way, this kind of an emotion can affect you.

How to produce it is another question. It is necessary to send through the music three different waves, three different ways of separating it at the time when it is played into three different sections, each having a special content, a content of the intellect, one of the feeling, and one of the physical center. It does require to some extent, of course, a certain ability of really being, to the extent that one can, be objective or awake or conscious. To that extent the music can really reflect it, and I would say that is the relationship that any person performing, when it has to do with music, in a certain way wishing if he possibly can for an effect, but not needing it, that is, a person who plays ought to be complete within himself and not be dependent on the reaction of an audience. And as a matter of fact he should be completely free from it because it doesn't make any difference as far as his own state is concerned.

I just want to tell you this because if you can listen this way, I think you might profit by it, and I have no doubt that what I have said is a little different from the way you usually have listened to music or the way you understand it. In my opinion it is the only way by which music can be used as a means of communication. Any other way will remain all the time a reinterpretation of what we have said with words and it isn't. It is a language completely its own. It's a language that even seldom can be translated into another language. It is a language that has to stay as such, and that any attempt to translate it, to reinterpret it in another way is really deleterious to the music itself. It should as a language stand there, be there, and not be touched in any other way.

So now by this time I hope everybody is seated. The rain has held you up? Ya? I'm glad you are here. All right let'a stop that little box.

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You see how difficult it is to follow that now because you become completely involved in what you hear and you keep on hearing it in the same way you always hear it. And to try even during playing to separate it or even when you make an attempt to try to listen to it as I explained with your heart, it's extremely difficult. I think for an unconscious person it is impossible. Only in certain instances that sometimes it reaches an emotional quality. For

most of it, it goes to your brain and from there it can go to your heart and also because you might say certain satisfactory tonality, not a question of liking it, but something that does not rub you the wrong way, or is not disharmony for you as far as you know disharmony; or even anti-rhythm, or that what sometimes is staccato, or the different ways of how one melody mixes with another in different rhythms, three against four or sometimes four against five. Things like that you see are the differences in rhythm which you can hear but are not necessarily cacophonical. You adjust yourself to that but that is about all that you get.

And in order to get something that I talked about, you have to be first relaxed, then the concentration on wanting to follow it, and wanting to hear it, and not to miss it, makes you constantly tense. And if you now, during hearing, you could really breathe, sometimes quite deeply and at that time you simply try to recollect yourself or to bring yourself, you bring yourself to a certain unity. In that form of relaxation, by means of breathing, you can accomplish something for yourself that will eliminate the tenseness, that will do away with the concentration; you will actually, as if with this breath, you take a new lease on life. And with that you start then again and again all during the playing, if you want to get out of the playing something, you will remain active that way. And that is one of the first requirements that there is something in you that remains active; not this passively listening, passively falling asleep, completely becoming identified with it.

It is a certain way which we, of course, we are familiar with it; it is the way we usually listen to music. You see, the reason I play is because it is a little different. And it gives you an opportunity during this time to Work. Otherwise what is the sense? You can have a record or something and sit and enjoy it in your easy chair. When you come now to music, and I hope we will have more of it when I come back in April, that we will have something of that kind that could be a little bit more continuous; that you will start to learn how to listen and what the effect can be for yourself, for yourself as a result in your life that sometimes, when you happen to think about it, that it can give you an impetus, or you recollect, or something that then starts as a feeling based on that what you have heard, or what you have been affected by, that it gives you, at such a time, a real desire of doing something about your life.

Language ultimately, as a form of communication, has to become more and more to try to remind one of the necessity of inner life, inner

existence, real being, not surface, not superficial, not on the periphery. It is alright for life as we know it, and as we have to live it so often, and probably so many hours in the day, but that what really counts is what you are essentially, what you are inside, what you are, what doesn't change really, what is you yourself, permanently, and to have that recalled or to remember that it exists and that, at such a time, that you know it exists when it exists for you, that it has a possibility of remaining because it wants life to be given to it.

One has to learn that there is something that has to have attention. That it is not just ordinary existence the way we are so familiar with, and which, of course, always puts you to sleep. But that besides that maybe there is another kind of way of, I call it, communication. Ultimately, it is that between whatever the spirit could give in order to tell the body what to do -- the relationship between the inner life and the outer life, that is, the relationship between that what is essentially yourself and that what you have to manifest. Both belong to us, both is man. We're not one or the other, we are both constantly connected with it, but the emphasis is sometimes much to much on that what is really not worth it -- not in the end worth it, not even for a long time in one's life is worth it,. Only we do it because of a certain momentum, or because of a certain easy way of following the line of least resistance. I would say, once and for all you have to get out of that, that kind of a state,—the state of confusion, as it were, because the line of least resistance will not lead you to any particular purpose that you can really go after. You have no purpose when you follow that particular line. You let it go and simply as a form of ordinary laissez-faire. That what is on the outside determines then what you are going to be.

Man has to have something in him that is, let's call it, his "I", that is the kind of thing that remains and if there, and is there all the time, can tell you, can really tell you what to do, how to talk, how to communicate, how to live how to be (- - -) and if this, as music, (a little unusual for you) can help to remind you of that, perhaps, in that sense as an emotional quality, it will have value. I would say it is enough, it doesn't matter for the rest. It doesn't matter what else you may get one way or the other, as long as you have a feeling that you wish to remain alive.

M1178

The second way of approach is the possibility of a development on an emotional scale. For that Gurdjieff has written music. Music of a certain kind many times based on old esoteric melodies which has stood, you might say, the test of time and which were more or less derived from certain sections where there was still sufficiently aliveness in an esoteric sense which was still as a remnant of that, you might call it a gnostic existence, of that what was reality for such people in the olden times when they were a little bit less confused. Much of that is like sacred dances belonging to temples or religions or dervish music, certain rhythms, very simple ones, in a certain way, put together in a different kind of a form of harmony so that when they are played that certain things are struck in man which usually are not struck in our ordinary music to which we are so accustomed and which of course is from, a great deal of the time nothing else but nonsense. But that that what is reality in its simplicity when it can strike a person in his deepest depths will help him then to develop or at least to get going in the direction where he usually is not touched and because of that there is a possibility for his emotional development.

At the same time it has to be received by means of one's ears, it has to engage the physical body in a certain way and sometimes regarding that particular reception one has to be in the state physically of being able to receive it. Also what is necessary is not to classify it in accordance with the ordinary intellectual ideas of what the music should sound like. So the requirement then, you might say, is instead of developing one's intellect it is to still it and keep it quiet. So again all three centers are engaged.

M1186

So tonight, music, a little. Saying the same things in a different way. It requires perhaps a different sensitivity and some of us are not always used to that kind of a language. We are not familiar with emotional contents or emotional facts or emotional states sufficiently to be able to distinguish. And still, you have to learn to distinguish between emotional states in yourself and as you receive an emotional quality from the outside in exactly the same way as you have to learn to distinguish between words when you are young, and between sounds when you have a modulation of voice.

In this kind of music, I try to express certain things which sometimes may be familiar to you and sometimes not at all. And it is exactly because you have never heard it before, although there are motives that reoccur, that there is a possibility by its newness that it starts to affect you in a certain way and the idea is, of course, that you may remember it and that it, as it were, deposits in you something of a different kind of quality, at least different from ordinary life.

But you see, the recollection now of a meeting like this and getting together - it is mostly a necessity for you to absorb, and not with your ears, at least not primarily. It is something that really engages the totality of your body. And the better the body will be for that kind of reception, the more you should make an attempt to relax, in all three centers of yourself. I've explained that, as you probably remember, in the little story in Paul Herzen. But the threefold approach of music and the taking in of sounds in a general way by a human body are, of course, linked up with the state of the physical and the state of the emotional and the state of the intellectual center. And there are the three roads which are then used. When they are in the music, this is a necessity. They have to be in the music as such, and they have to be played and put into music in that way, because the music itself naturally is composed not only of sounds, it is rhythm, it is touch, it is the use of pedal, it is the use of overtones, it is the force sometimes, a certain rhythm in a fast or slow manner, sometimes cacaphonic notes, not always harmonious.

All of that goes into the music as such and you hear it, and there is a possibility in yourself of taking it apart, as it were, and let the different component parts affect you in the three different components of yourself. So that what you hear with your ear are primarily the sounds, of course, which you could recognize but you must make an attempt not to classify them. In a

state of relaxation of your mind, you don't classify at all. You just receive. As far as your heart is concerned, it enters also through your head, through the ears, but it is not directed to the brain. It goes immediately down to one's heart. There is a certain connection for which one has to be sensitive, and it is possible to hear that way with your heart. It is an emotional quality which is dependent on the rates of vibrations of the sounds. And very often it is the combination of certain rates which will do that. This particular affect on the heart is dependent on overtones mostly. It is not the bass, but sometimes in the bass you can have the overtones of the treble. And in the treble you have mostly the melody, which is something for your mind.

But all together as sounds, that what is produced as volume and which reaches you can also affect you in a physical way. And the physical way is that your body will start to correspond in a certain rate of vibration by itself corresponding to the rates of vibration which are produced by the music. And that kind of vibration is like a tone which is then given and also one can become aware of in the physical sense. The body actually can vibrate. And it also can have an effect on the wish of the body to do something corresponding to that what it receives. And you know well enough that certain melodies can produce definite activities on the part of the people who hear it, even marches or war music or sentimental music or sometimes church music, religious music can produce in you, in your physical state, something that you really go out and do something with.

The three effects on oneself are again combined within a person. The effects are not the same, they are quite different. But they can be combined and then produce in oneself as a result, a state of ones being. And it is not a question then of liking or disliking; it's a question of being affected. And affected in a certain way and if it is right, and if it is right in an objective sense, it really will become unforgettable. So that there are certain melodies which are produced, you might say, in very favored conditions. You will always remember them and then, when they are permanent, they will produce in you exactly the same state as when you had received them. This is the difference between subjectivity and objectivity. Objectivity can bring back the exact amount of emotion, or the exact state as it was when you originally received it. In a subjective way you could approach it but you never reach it.

So this is for tonight and we drink to that, because I'm very happy that you are all here. To a good evening for all of us.

M1335

In San Francisco I remember this last time in playing a little bit because we have a piano there at Clara Street. I tried to explain how one should listen to music. I would like to say something now of what it is that you should listen to because I play every once in awhile and then you sit and you listen and whatever the affect is, I do not know to what extant it is clear to you that it is not purely an emotional state. And that in music there is much more than just an emotional quality of a combination of sounds. But I hesitate a little bit of saying it because it might sound as if it is a little bit too much intellectualizing about rates of vibrations. And therefore, for those who do not want to put it in that kind of a form they must not really listen or, at least they should not criticize.

For me, it is something that is a combination of two - of that what is an emotional quality as touch and pedal and the use of singing through or helping, but also the question of one's mind in which certain things have to be adjusted at the proper time and in the proper relationship to each other. And that much of the music I try to play is based on overtones.

Overtones are in each note on the piano. It is a rate of vibrations which is set by the key whatever the note represents. And there are sixteen overtones that are struck at the same tine like a monochord when it is struck in a fundamental note will start to vibrate in different ways and the relationship of each overtone towards the preceding one is a certain definite number so that the first overtone for any kind of a tone is an octave higher and, from then on, it becomes a quart a quint and then a quart and then a little less than a third and it goes up all the way as high as it can go - as far as the 16 notes actually can be heard individually.

Studies with a monochord will give you an idea of what is the relationship and that is based then on a Do, struck, and the next Do being twice the number of vibrations and we call that an octave higher. And the relationship is pleasing to our ear. That is why Bach, in writing and in making this kind of system in the Well-Tempered Clavier simply used that as a basis of an octave in relationships of one note with another so that the scale as far as the C, for instance, is concerned going up, and the shifting of that what is Fa towards the Sol and becoming 1 and 1/2 notes and the Si-Do becoming half a note. All that has a significance. So that our quint, that is, the fifth note which is Sol regarding the Do, where it came from, is in a definite

relationship towards that what is the fundamental note as Do. But one does not know these kind of things so easily because the ear is adjusted at the present time to that what we have heard all the time, and it is mostly classical music in accordance with certain ways of what we call harmony of a certain form.

But we are used to that in ordinary life we use the decimal system simply as a foundation for our measurement and it is based on the figure 1 0 - 1 and 0, but it does not mean that there are other forms of measurement also possible, in which 1 and 9 can be a fundamental and then 18 would be equal to 20 and 27 would be equal to 30 and so there are different ways of dividing space and time and vibration rates in accordance with a certain unit. And we become quite limited in the utilization of a unit that is based only on, you might say, a limited idea of an octave. The question of vibrations and hearing notes, hearing sounds which belong to each other, that the overtones, when it reaches the 12th or the 13th, become equal to the D which is right next to the C, when that is struck and that then, from then on, a new series starts belonging to the D, also with 16 overtones in it. And the complicated affair that is when a chord is struck and all these vibrations are put together - sometimes it becomes cacophonical and sometimes it's quite harmonious.

This is what I want to explain because there is something in my mind that every once in awhile, in striking certain notes, I want to use the right hand and the left hand in combination with each other and that, sometimes the melody is in the right hand and it must be finished by the left hand, in order to give it as if it were an answer started as a question in the right hand. And the left hand will then in combination with that produce the right kind of vibration for the answer of the question. This you can hear. This you can also visualize. This you can know very definitely as something that becomes a structure.

The second thing is that there the are cacophonical notes together and that the right hand and the left hand are not at all united in the form of ordinary Wohl Temperierte Klavier or the classical combination of certain sounds which, so-called, belong together. I am afraid that Hans Sachs would have a terrible time if he ever heard this kind of music and would be much worse than the notes he made for Beckmesser when he played on the lute in the Fleistersinger, you probably remember. So, I do not care very much about that.

I do care about the maintenance of a certain emotional quality, and that all the different ingredients that are available on the piano can be used in any kind of a combination so that the final sound, or that what is produced is not hampered by the different rates of vibrations that are used in order to producer a chord. This, I would like you to listen, that is, the openness of your mind and not prejudiced - and simply to hear it and let it enter into your mind as something that sounds like a vibration rate connected with another one and that particularly when a certain note is struck and the overtones are there singing through the piano that then, at a certain time, dependent on the rhythm, another note is struck which is equal to the overtones and sends the overtones much and much further than otherwise, with the original note, would be possible. That is really the effect.

These are things that come in one when one becomes more and more part of what one plays, so that it is not then the mind dictating what the left hand should do. The left hands knows because of a certain level of being which is established as a result of the right hand striking a note which is taking place within oneself, and creates then a level of being from which level the left hand is directed to strike another note belonging to it.

This I say, is a tremendously interesting possibility for anyone who wants to play music. But for that, one has to be completely free from the ordinary rules in accordance with classical music. One has to be free quite definitely from what is called “bon ton” in music and that what belongs in music and that is why sometimes it is extremely difficult for anyone who is so-called musically trained in a certain, what I call, a narrow direction, to consider even the sounds that are produced when I happen to play a little bit. It is something that has a value because ultimately it is a form of life that is expressed in that way. I want to say it simply to give you a little background, not for any other reason. If you cannot understand it and if it has no meaning to you, for me it doesn’t matter at all because it is my life that I play. Add for that I have that relationship towards it and for me it has that kind of a value.

If you can use it in order to listen quietly - I have said so many times how you should try to drain yourself - how you should be really receptive - how you should take your thoughts out of your mind and let them go down into the drain. Let them flow out. Let them flow out through your feet and through your fingers. Let your feeling simply be diminished so that your heart becomes open to receive something of an emotional quality and totally your body, relaxed...muscles. Do not have any kind of a tension in the

muscles which prevents a muscle even to be open enough to receive rates of vibration when they happen to be outside, almost I would say, knocking on the door of its physical existence, wishing to be let in. And the body, wishing to correspond and start to vibrate in the same rate of vibration as that what is of produced outside of the body. It might help you really, to see yourself much more complete, and I think it could give you a depth of an understanding within your life.

Thank God that Bach was an interesting, marvelous person. At the same time, in the sense of life, he was also limited. For me, the limitations only exist in the mind. That what is without any limitation is what is one's feeling, particularly when it goes over into an emotional state. And that what reminds a person for wishing to grow is to see to what extent his emotion can touch that what is the highest in the highest outside of him and within himself. That is the road for further understanding because it will lead through fusion of man becoming nothing. Timid, humiliated, sometimes that what he actually is...a non-entity in order to make room for that what he should become as a harmonious man, striving constantly towards the wish to understand the laws of the universe and his relationship towards His Endlessness.

So, by this time, your coffee is cold anyhow and I may...

M1514

Now pretty soon, I won't know how to call Friday evening, because it is now mixed music and a little talk. We used to have only music. And there was objection by some of them when I started to talk. And then we had a consensus of opinion. And then I was allowed to talk again. So, I hope you don't mind it. The difficulty always on our Friday evenings - we call it "Group IV", and we can call that also Group IV here, is what should I say in connection with music? To straddle it we have been talking a great deal about the Barn. Because it was at the end of the week and it was in preparation for the Saturday and Sunday. So that let me out quite easy because I didn't have to adjust the kind of a talk to music at all.

But here it's a little different. I would like to say something about music in general. Or what it is really that we try to do by means of music. Logically, it is a language. Made up of tones and combinations, certain combinations of tones, either as chords or as overtones. Touch. Pedal. Rhythm. All different things that belong to playing on a piano. And the question is always: "How can one convey by means of an instrument something that is primarily one's feeling?" Of course it is a necessity of becoming part of that instrument. And it's very difficult because the instrument is so mechanical. And there are so few variations possible with an instrument when it has a few hammers and you're dependent on them. Felts and strings.

The only way by which music can really become expressive is through the voice. Because then it's part of the body. And in that, by means of voice or that what is ordinary song, or sounds, in a certain way with or without words, one can put something else in it, also coming from oneself as a body. And the relationship then between that what is being produced as a voice and that what could come from one's emotional state. You see, we are now in using the piano - any other kind of an instrument except perhaps the violin or bass or a cello where there is a much more direct contact between fingers and that what vibrates, you lose that here with a piano. It makes it much more difficult. And you have to find it with all little bits of gimmicks to produce a combination of that what otherwise would be a direct contact. And we try to find it by means of a pedal or a singing through of notes. But still it is still mechanical. The difficulty then in listening to anything of this kind of music is that you try to divorce it from the instrument and all you should really try to hear are the vibrations as produced by the strings. And whatever

manipulations then are possible to produce that, becomes almost the same as if one is trying to sing, in a certain way with a depth of a voice or whatever there may be, a range of an ability of changing a voice, the timbre, or the resonance, or the depth or the range of the bass and let's say, soprano.

But how then, you must listen when it is only based on the vibration rates which reach you. It is then a question then, how can it reach you? And where can you take it in? What should be received, and how should one be in receiving it? Because you become then a reception apparatus in which you also have to become sensitive to sounds. And then it is translated into a state of yourself. And it is reverse of course from producing a sound and when you sing. But when you now receive it, there is a possibility of receiving it a little differently and if one then could actually distinguish between the effects of sounds in general on that what is now you, and if you can receive it in three different kinds of ways, when afterwards one could, since it is received in one body, combine the impression and the total result would be much more like stereo when the music comes from two different sides.

What takes place in the body is a combination of the three different kinds of impressions. And of course it is logical that one says, "Yes, I hear this with my mind." And there is something that takes place in your mind. And of course you can also to a certain extent feel it. Because there is something that is touched within oneself and you say it is emotionally effective. And the third one would be a reception by the body as it is. The three different kinds of impressions you receive are not the same. They come from the same source. But in the source also there should be three definite ways of recognizing an approach. And you almost have to look at it as though when you are listening to music that three different lines reach you at the same time.

When it is in your mind and you recognize certain things that are familiar or you have associations with it, it is the wrong way of listening. Listening should be as if you hear a sound without trying to define it, simply basing it on whatever the sound can produce in you. And a variation which many times can take place in a different tonality should have a definite effect of a reception in your brain without defining what it is or what it looks like or what it sounds like or what it reminds you of. So in the first place, your mind has to be quite clear. And it has to be open enough. Not prejudiced as it were. Don't try to classify sounds. You don't classify the singing of the wind. You just listen and you hear it.

Emotionally, it will reach you much more direct than you think. It enters into your ear logically. And then it spreads immediately into two different parts. One can go to your brain. The other can go to your feeling center, maybe solar plexus. And if it reaches you deep enough it will go to your heart. It's an emotional quality and it produces a certain state in the emotional center. Certain tensions. Also, certain rates of vibrations which are recognized as vibrations and, thank goodness, you cannot define it. Because feelings, you cannot really describe. The result of that, since we are human beings, is that it will have an effect on your body.

But it is not the same as how a body can be affected when it is exposed to vibrations from the outside. And if the body is then in such a state in which it is sufficiently flexible or capable of receiving such vibrations as if then the body will start to vibrate also. I explained it I think once - it's like a tuning fork.

But you see what happens then. One receives it, and then within yourself there is a combination of the different impressions reaching you. And sometimes one thing is emphasized, sometimes the other. Or the third. But out of it totally it should leave an impression which is a combination of all three. And to the extent that you yourself are capable of receiving, and to the extent that you are open enough, and also to the extent that you are relaxed, and that you actually are open in that sense, without prejudice, without too many thoughts, without too many feelings, but just listen, to that extent will you receive three different impressions. Provided of course that in the music also, the three different lines are sent out.

This makes it difficult for anyone who wants to perform. Because it's necessary that in that kind of a music, a person who plays, the closer he can come to the state of real Consciousness, or an Awareness which for him must last because he is playing, and therefore the state of Awakening, that will produce through the music a three-fold approach. Again, one has to be sensitive for that. Again, it is the same in reverse of what an audience should do when it listens. In the same way a person who plays should also attempt to do that. If it is done right, the kind of music becomes much more Objective. Or, sometimes it is said, Conscious. But when the emotional quality is in it, it really becomes Conscientious. That is, there is value in it. And that is the language.

To what extent can you now receive something that has value, and changes in value, and then, as it were in such value changes, it is an emotional quality, it starts to talk. That is really how one ought to express oneself. That is really how an instrument can be used as an extension of oneself. And that many times that a person who does play and is then willing to devote himself to that what is maybe a piano or what may be an instrument, that part of him is actually expressed. And many times in this kind of art, that what is a person becomes apparent through this kind much more than through painting. Much more than through sculpture. Much more, I would say, than any other kind of art production. It is so difficult. Because one is not used to it, one has to be really alive, and the instrument, to some extent at least has to correspond.

And the instrument is not always right for a person who plays. It's sometimes a little fussy. I think they have a right to be. And there are very few instruments that really correspond to the player. I'm not saying this as an excuse, but I'm saying it as something that should be ideal. That one should have an instrument with one the same way as you carry your voice with you.

So when you wish to listen, try to relax and try to be open. Don't criticize, because there is nothing to criticize. You cannot. In the first place you have never heard it, in the second place, it all depends on how you are, and a critical attitude is absolutely absurd when you want to receive something, the same way as an attitude of argument is never right toward higher knowledge. So, all I have to do now is to play, I think, because I think the accent should be on music tonight, not on talk.

M1588 - Organ

You know I played organ this afternoon and it sounded very good from where I sat. The sound, it is sometimes different for the person who sits in the church and for the person who plays, because usually in playing you are too close to some of the pipes and you don't hear enough of the ensemble. But it was a very nice thing to play; the organ was a good organ. Two weeks from today we'll play in another church, 1 think it is a Presbyterian, where there is a so-called German organ which may be better.

Organ is quite different from piano, and I had a little difficult time finding where the stops were and the loudness and different things that are technical, but the reason why I am interested is that by playing on an organ the sustaining notes, as long as you put your finger on the key it has to give a sound, it's quite different from piano, and therefore with sustaining notes which you want to use as a background for certain melodies that you might say you play against it, it's a different thing from a piano, where you can of course extend the note also by pressing down the pedal, but then it affects all the other notes that you play, so it becomes a little messy if you have too much of the pedal there.

With the sustaining note in an organ, you give the background, and particularly when it's in the bass, you have something against which the melody can stand up, and the effect, of course, is quite different - not only because of the sound, but also because of the different relationships of the notes. I'm not so familiar with it. That is why it takes some time, also, on each organ, of course, to get used to it. And I've felt there were many mistakes which perhaps can be corrected if I played a little more on it. For piano, it's not only a different thing, the tonality of a piano is different from an organ. If an organ is a kind of a language, a piano also is a language, but in a different tone of voice, and I hope you can understand with the differences in such tonality that there is also a different language, and that one has to use a different kind of a language with a piano, and comparing to organ, it may even be sometimes a little contradictory.

M2389 - Gurdjieff Music

Our last evening, so we'll make it a little special. You have had a Work day already today. I would like to play a little bit of Gurdjieff music, not too much, but we do that at lunch at the Barn, and I think it's very appropriate. It is music that was composed by Gurdjieff and arranged by de Hartmann. You probably know that there are some records available with that kind of music. This music is played by one of the members on the West Coast, or really the person of the Chico group who is a musician, and the rendition is very well played. As a matter of fact, it was played this last Saturday at the Land.

You have to listen to music of Gurdjieff with an open mind and even, if you possibly can, with an open heart. Much of the music is, of course, unusual, and it is taken from certain melodies which existed in the Middle East, and some of it is called sacred music from temple dances, movements, so they have a very definite flavor. And I think Gurdjieff was very fortunate that a man like de Hartmann was around. He was the director of the conservatory in St. Petersburg at the time, an excellent musician and composer. And to have him there to take on the particular difficulty in making a good composition without losing the flavor of either the melody or the combination of the notes. Fortunately, de Hartmann, being a Russian, understood that.

I think we would have a great deal of difficulty in translating, as it were, that kind of music in the terminology which belongs to it. Gurdjieff himself played guitar at the time when he was young, so I understand. I never heard him play any. I do remember that both Gurdjieff and de Hartmann, at the time they were in New York many years ago, that we had a large organ and also a piano, and Gurdjieff would play some melody on the organ, and then de Hartmann would try to compose that or make out of the melody a little bit more sense maybe, and then Gurdjieff would come over and say "No, no, no." And de Hartmann had to play it again —no it was not right yet —until finally it was right, and that was exactly the way it ought to be, and in that way they worked together on this music. So sometimes you can say this is Gurdjieff. For my feeling it is. It's only composed by de Hartmann, but you might say very understandingly.

In a general way the music of Gurdjieff is used, of course, for movement classes. That is for actual dance movements which occupies a great deal of, I would say, the teaching. The teaching of Gurdjieff consists of

three different approaches in connection with the three centers, and movements are the approach through a physical means in order to teach the body not to be habitual. So many times the rhythms are different for the different parts of the body like the head or the arms or the legs. And the totality is a combination of certain postures or movements by themselves which are indicative of a certain state of oneself and quite definitely different from what one naturally would be. And it makes it sometimes extremely difficult to do these movements because you have to have them in your head and visualize them if you can before you even take on the next posture. And, that together with that, the music will help you, not so much encourage you, but to create within oneself a certain sensitivity on account of which it is easier to make these different parts of the body coordinate in an unusual way.

The second approach is an emotional one and there is a tremendous collection of Gurdjieffian music. Part of it is published by the Institute in Paris, and part is still in manuscript not so easily available. And there are some people who have learned how to play part of it, some of them under the instruction of Gurdjieff himself. But also, those who have been so fortunate as to be under that influence of Gurdjieff have been able to teach also a few others who, even if they didn't know Gurdjieff, at least could understand the music, and this person who is playing this was under the influence of one of the foremost teachers under Gurdjieff's management.

And, of course, the third approach is a mental one. That is talking about ideas and clarification of what is needed for Work on oneself and the practical application of such — in whatever one understands of the meaning of what is being said. You must look at these three approaches as if they also each one for themselves consist of three so called subdivisions in which (although in the physical center the primary movement is done by the body) there is quite definitely a mental function of knowing what to perform and how to coordinate the different parts of the body. But also the music is helpful in that respect, so there again there is a triad of a combination of partly, you can call it, a triunity.

In music itself sometimes it is the structure that can help you to understand it. Sometimes it is the vibration which is set up by listening to the music itself on the part of the body so that then the three different functions of a person in accordance with his centers also are stimulated by the one primary impression of the music of an emotional kind in which there is quite definitely a feeling or something similar to a feeling or an emotion which is started and affects one's solar plexus and probably one's heart. But that, in

addition, there is the necessity of a certain kind of understanding, I call it structure. It has to do with rhythm. It has to do with counter movements in, if it is played on a piano, the differences between the left and the right hand. It has to do with certain chords which sometimes sound maybe a little cacaphonical, but in any event, belong together and then produce also in the mind a certain appreciation of — I call this a structure of — how it is built up. Then, of course, whatever there is as rhythm or whatever there is as an effect of the music totally as a combination of chords and vibrations sets up in the body itself a certain rate of vibration of the body only.

And it is received many times when one is in a very good state of really rested, quite at ease, that is no particular strain, relaxed in the greatest possible attempt. That then the body can start to move by itself. I do not know if you are familiar with these kind of ideas because they are not very usual. If you have a tuning fork, and you strike it, and you put it on the table as you know how you do sometimes, the sound as vibration is related to another tuning fork which is not struck, but which starts to vibrate as a result of the influence of the rates of vibration which come off the original so that then when you stop the original, the other fork continues to sound. It's very much like that.

The music produces by the combination of vibration rates a certain influence on a body which is capable in relaxation to accept it and then start to vibrate on it's own account. It's quite different from hearing. It's quite different from an emotional state. It is very definitely a physical one. Perhaps this explanation might indicate that music and movements do play a great part in becoming acquainted with the ideas of Gurdjieff. It is very difficult to have these kind of things appear in different groups, because for all of this certain teachers are necessary who really know either the music or the movements themselves, and it is very difficult for us even — if you call ourselves in Warwick a little bit of a headquarters — even to train people to be able to go out and perform that way. Because there is no use doing anything regarding Gurdjieff unless it is done correctly and in an exact way. That's the only way by which anything that comes from Gurdjieff can be digested and should be digested; otherwise it will not have any particular result.

So I would suggest we just play a few pieces of this. Just listen to it. Don't have any prejudices. Just let it penetrate, and it doesn't matter what the

result is as long as one is affected in a certain way, and it is possible, of course, that this takes place. So will we stop these and then play the music.

ON MUSIC

The Story of Paul Herzen
by
Willem Nyland

It was one day, after supper, or when supper was nearly over, that one of my children asked who Paul Herzen really was. We always had known him as Paul or Uncle Paul and it was only much later that I found out that he had an initial "M" also, as first initial and to this day I do not know what it means. The children are quite fond of him and call him Uncle although he is no relation of ours. He just happens to be our neighbor across the little inlet of the bay where we live and we can see his house through the trees particularly in winter time when the leaves have fallen. But we know he is there from the fact that very often we can hear him play piano and particularly on quiet evenings, the sounds carry across the water quite clearly.

There is a little foot bridge across the water which is not very wide at that point and several of us prefer to use the rather narrow road which in this way connects our island with the mainland. There is a larger bridge about a mile or so further inland and cars can go across there but we usually cross by foot if we want to go to the store to do some marketing. Uncle Paul uses the bridge quite often for a little walk around our island. We call it our island although we are not the only ones who have built here. I believe we built our house before Uncle Paul. But as our children started to grow up and played outside the house on the lawn, Uncle Paul would stop once and awhile and talk to them and that is how we got acquainted.

The children knew all about that, how it had happened that he came by one evening and we started to talk. He always was alone on his walks and I knew that he lived in the little house across the water and knowing that the music we heard once and awhile came from there, I asked him if he played. Yes, he said, a little, and he wanted to know if we could hear him. Apparently he didn't want to talk about it although he was not particularly bashful but it seemed he wasn't quite sure that what he played was music. He said they were sounds and rhythms and sometimes they were harmonious and pleasant to listen to. I asked him to come in and sit down with us for a little while and meet my wife and have a drink. And this he did and after that he came often and stopped sometimes long and sometimes just for a short time.

Having an inquisitive nature myself and perhaps because of my training in the publishing business, I kept on asking questions, within certain restrictions of course of politeness and gradually out of these conversations I could put together a few facts and reconstruct as it were, part of his life. So when the children asked me about him I could tell them something more than they knew already.

He was born in Germany, in Eisenach, in the Thuringen Forest. This is the same town where Sebastian Bach was born and where the Wartburg Castle is. This castle is famous for two reasons, one is that Martin Luther stayed there and was kept in hiding after the conclave of Worms in 1521, and the other is that Wagner used it in Tannhauser as the scene of the contest of the Minnesingers. It may have been this atmosphere which in Paul's early youth affected him or the fact that his father and several of his brothers and sisters were musical. But in any event, a foundation was laid quite early for Paul's inclination toward music. His father was a good cabinetmaker and also quite busy in religious activities which have made Eisenach a center of religious conferences. His father played piano quite well and also the organ and was allowed to practice in the Nikolaikirche. Moreover, he played the violin and sang in the church choir where a great number of Bach cantatas and Gregorian chants were sung. At home, when his cabinet work would allow him, there would be small gatherings on Sundays when chamber music would be played for piano and organ and violin and Paul's two sisters would sing, one soprano and the other alto.

In this surrounding, Paul grew up. Eisenach was a nice little town with a few good schools and a beautiful country. Very often, the school and the country didn't mix and a trip on a bicycle was preferable to some studies in Caesar or Plato. Paul was brought up to study piano as a hobby. As a profession, he would become a cabinetmaker. But neither of them seemed to be successful. He would study piano a little while and his father would give him lessons. Then he didn't practice enough and his father would stop. Then after some time, Paul would start on his own initiative and when his father heard him play again, he arranged with the choirmaster of the church to give Paul some lessons. This went on for a year or so and then Paul was again more interested in his bicycle and his father stopped the lessons because he said it was no use to pay money when there was no interest in piano playing.

But his father was wrong. There was an interest in music but not the usual kind of practicing Czerny and trying to play a few sonatas of Mozart and Beethoven. All of that had to be learned and Paul did his best and accomplished a little. In particular he remembered a sonata by Grieg and the Holberg Suite and one of the concertos of Handel for piano and two violins

which he played with some of his schoolmates. But mostly he would sit in front of the piano and try to practice chords and listen to the harmony so that he could distinguish between the different notes or voices even when they were struck together. In this way, he tried to analyze music and became very fond of Bach.

But many times, what he played sounded just awful and in reality it was quite cacophonous, much to the distress of the other members of the musical family. Such criticisms made Paul withdraw a little and he then started to play his own music only when, he knew he was alone. And this went on for a long time. Not much is known about Paul's activities from the time he left Germany and came to America. He, somehow or other acquired with his cabinetmaking ability, a flair for design and then went into building-construction and some architectural work. I know he lived in Japan for some time and also in South America but as I say, I do not know much about those periods and Paul never mentioned them. He came to live near us by accident, having heard that the little house was empty and he bought it. One thing he did was to build a fairly large room for his piano. It was what he called his music room.

It had a few French doors which opened up on the lawn which in turn sloped down towards the water and that is the reason why we could hear him play once and awhile at our house when the French doors of his room were open. The children were over to his house a few times and met his wife because he was married but they had no children. Paul then played for them and our children came back with the story that the music was all right but they couldn't place it. How I must say here that our family is not very musical and the music the children hear is practically all over the radio except for a few records which I cherish very much and which can be played on the record player. At the same time, they urged us to go and visit Paul and his wife and to ask him to play then.

It took us a little while to follow up this suggestion but one day, in the cool of a summer evening, we went by the footbridge to the mainland and went to Paul's house. He knew we were coming of course and after meeting his wife who was very quiet, we went to his music room and started to talk. There were some flowers around and the French doors were open. The sun was setting slowly and the whole room was vibrant with the spell of the evening. I asked him to play then and he hesitated. He never played very much for others he said and before he played he wanted to say something about music. It was by way of explanation he said and to try to listen to it in a certain way. Music was different from other forms of art and although it could be more pure than any other form of art, we do not understand it really

at all. Singing, that is using the voice of a human being, may achieve the highest expression because it can become more one with the performer than any instrument ever can become. Instruments have their limitations the same as colors and brushes and stone.

In acting, where the human body is used, it can reach a high degree of unity of all parts of man, although the physical body predominates. In playing the piano or any other instrument, the purpose would be to try to be one with the instrument so that music can flow through the instrument as well as through the performer.

In order to free oneself from all kinds of associations, physically, emotionally as well as mentally, the music should be unfamiliar and should stand on its own, with its rhythm, its tone combinations and harmony. The style should not remind one of someone else, and pianissimo, speed and touch should be felt and expressed as the tone combinations develop. There is a task the performer has as well as the listener; that is, to be as relaxed as possible in all functions of the person and to play as it were from inside out and to receive it from outside in.

It was difficult at first to understand what he meant and what I did not understand I couldn't agree with. But, nevertheless, I tried my best to do as he suggested and I tried to become more free.

Since that first evening we have become friends and we have seen a great deal of each other. I remember one evening when we apparently had all the time in the world and when we talked for several hours. I must say, however, that Paul talked most of the time and it wasn't necessary for me to interrupt because he seemed to be free of his shyness and what he said came like his music from somewhere inside. He repeated what he had said several times that this piano music was not meant as music for a concert hall. It is music for quiet evenings home or on a Sunday morning, when one can relax and one can find a place at the piano. Then perhaps one just plays, improvises, trying to follow or to make appear a certain melody or some harmonious chords. One cannot always be in a mood to play and perhaps one should be relaxed or at least at ease and then collect oneself so that the hands can be directed and the tone can be soft or loud, according to what one feels, or perhaps it should be in accordance with what one is oneself. It is difficult to say what one should be while playing. Sometimes one hears ahead of what might be or should be, as if one composes in one's head and one can see the whole structure, how one measure can and should follow another, how sometimes a framework of rhythm or melody has been set up which has become a law and outside of which one cannot go. Sometimes one only feels and the hands follow a pattern of touch. One is unable to find words to

express the loudness or the softness, the crescendo or retard of a movement, or perhaps the combination of two different rhythms, one for each hand. Sometimes the hands just move as if they also know intellectually and one can let them go because their rhythm is already understood as belonging to a melody.

So one can just play or dream, and perhaps it is not a dream; perhaps it can best be described as a state in which one is aware. It depends on how one's head and heart and hands can join together and can become harmonious or at least how they can be in balance with each other.

It was some time before I understood what he meant by being aware because for me an awareness was connected with being alive or alert. For instance I would say I am aware of the fact that the sun shines or I am aware of your presence in this room. And Paul said it was something like that but the awareness should include the presence of oneself. Of course it would be best if one could be oneself when one played and if that what one plays is also part of that. It is difficult to understand someone else's thoughts or emotions or to put oneself in the place of a composer. Even if composers have tried to indicate in their written music what to do and how to play and perhaps how to feel and how to direct the rhythm, the music still remains the thought or expression of someone else and it naturally must lead to a variety of interpretations. All such interpretations are of course justified but, even as a subjective expression why should one want to live the life of someone else. Playing music as written by someone else is still very much like a speech or an oration, consisting of quotations only. It is true one can in singing or reading poetry modulate the voice, one can make gestures, or change one's facial expressions and try to convey emotionally the meaning of the words used, but nevertheless if what one sings is from someone else it is all in quote.

It is strange that there is such a difference between the expressions of art in the form of music and for instance in the form of painting. In painting we recognize originality or newness, in music we are satisfied with the rendering of a copy, excepting of course when a musician plays or directs his own composition.

How then should one play and for that matter, how should one listen. Because both the player and the listener should be subject to some law in order to reach understanding between them. And moreover the question remains, what is what one could call one's own. At this moment Paul waited a little while probably because he now got to the point which seemed important to him, and then he continued.

Both my thoughts and my feelings are very much influenced by associations, he said, practically all the time. I remember a passage or a melody or a song from someone, I hear in my mind chords like church music and my hands adapt themselves to that and before I know it, I am caught in such associations and I have
lost myself in them, and it is no longer my own. It is the same with listening, as if I recognize something that reminds me of music I have heard before and then I classify, that is, I put it in pigeon holes; this is like Mozart or that is like Stravinsky. When I play someone else's music I know it is not my own. I have as it were stolen it and I can embroider a little bit on it. Perhaps it is not always so obvious and sometimes I might defend it as my own modulations but the line of recognition and admission of this fact is not sharp.

But a similar task is imposed on the listener. One should hear and not classify. One should like or dislike only as a result of all the impressions one has received.

There are three ways in which sound when it reaches us, can be assimilated. The obvious one is that we receive through our ears as a variety and combinations of vibrations which are in some manner or other registered in our brain, that is our thinking brain. These vibrations as they are registered, we define as sound. It is interesting how our ears can distinguish and register separately a tremendous quantity of different vibration rates. They are of course represented in different ways and a great variety of combinations besides rates of vibrations are possible. We can distinguish between loudness and softness, a large or a small volume, notes which are combined according to rules of different harmonies. How a note or a chord is struck as expressed by touch on a piano, or how in such cases a pedal is used for letting certain sounds continue. All of this can be heard separately and some of these effects can be felt. It is quite possible that there is a direct path to one's center of emotions and the registrations of such impressions become for us feelings.

I interrupted him here because I wanted to ask what he meant by centers. He had used this word several times before and I was not entirely clear how one could talk about them. Paul explained then to me that in a very general way each human being is composed of three fundamental parts which are in general indicated by the words thinking or mental, emotional or feeling and physical or sensing. These three functions constitute a human body and we can distinguish fairly easily to which group functions belong. These functions are localized in what we call centers. Although our contact with the outside world reaches us in a physical way by means of one or more of our sense organs; seeing, hearing, smell, touch, etc., such impressions are sent through to one of the three centers and then are classified as a mental process,

a feeling process or a physical process. And sometimes these processes, as a result of one impression, go on at the same time in the three centers.
It is difficult to say which paths they take but it is true that music for instance as we hear it can stir us emotionally without a registration in our mental center. At the same time, it is also true that because of our associative thoughts, the dividing line between thinking and feeling is very vague.

There is, however, a third means of receiving vibrations, directly, through the body, our physical center. For that, one has to be quite relaxed and open as it were, so that the vibrations can enter. It has been compared to the striking of a tuning fork and its effect on another tuning fork of the same vibration rate and it is possible that what we call being in harmony with music is based on this fact.

These three reactions on ourselves as we listen to music attentively and impartially do not, all three, have the identical effect on us and moreover, it is extremely seldom that the three centers thus affected can function independently of each other. One can, however, with a special effort, reach a condition in which it is possible to combine these three reactions into one, which, may be harmonious or not, but which leaves a very definite taste.

What is said about the listener is equally true for the performer but in reverse. Instead of receiving, the accent is on performing, but the conditions for the proper state of sending are the same. The more objective these can be, the better they can be received, the more unified the performer is in his functions, the more balanced the quality of music.

I do not know in how far Paul was right. I have a fairly “good ear” as the saying goes, although it is not absolute. But 1 can hear differences in tonality and I can also hear different notes in a chord. But as far as receiving music in myself in three different ways, that seems to be very difficult. I cannot get away from my own classifications and when I try to put that in words I am living with my memory and I lose the thread of the music. And it is the same with the anticipation of what I expect or hope to hear and sometimes it throws me off completely, either in tone or in rhythm. I have reached, however, some moments in which my body experienced a vibration but for that I had to be very quiet and relaxed. Maybe it is true what Paul says and in any event, it is a new experience in listening.